

JOINT CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 26, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 12:21 p.m. in the Town Room, Town Hall.

Present: Kathleen Anderson, Elaine Brighty, Pat Holland, Kay Moran, Stephanie O’Keeffe, Doug Slaughter, Diana Stein, Molly Turner

Absent: None

Others Present: Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director John Musante, Police Chief Charlie Scherpa, Police Captain Mike Kent, Fire Chief Keith Hoyle, Assistant Fire Chief Lindsay Stromgren.

Minutes: none

Police:

Chief Scherpa presented the list of current police vehicles: 28 cars and 2 trailers. Three major officers, the command staff, take vehicles home. Two detectives can take cars home when they are on call. Four cars are not insured and are going to be auctioned off. Chief Scherpa said that auctioning the cars is a new policy. It is more transparent, but we lose the reduction in price obtained from trading in the car on the new car purchases.

Town Meeting had suggested using 6 cylinder cars, and two were ordered. These cost about \$6,000 more than the Crown Victoria’s because they had to be retrofitted and they only get 1-2 miles per gallon more. However, in two years vehicles of this type, specific for police department use that will not have to be refitted might be available and may be considered for purchase.

Chief Scherpa’s requests were for 4 police cruisers totaling \$140,000 for FY 10. The vehicles being replaced had mileages of 80,000, 87,000, 71,000 and 88,000. At the time they are replaced, they will all have over 100,000 miles. He said that the replacements were needed because the seats and struts wear out in about 3 years.

Items put off until FY 11 include a transport vehicle (\$50,000), 50 protective clothing replacements (\$50,000) and a car shelter (\$5000) for FY 14, and future cruiser replacements for FY 11 and 12. The bullet-proof vests wear out, and the shelter would save cruisers from getting ice in the winter and wasting gas to melt it off.

Fire:

Fire Chief Hoyle said the Quint should be ready this summer, but the grant that would have freed the appropriated funds for other projects was turned down.

There are only three vehicles that can be taken home and then only by the chiefs. These vehicles have the appropriate gear in the car for rapid response. This department uses the smaller V 6's and not the Victoria's to save on gas costs. The number of vehicles that go out on a call depends on whether someone was reported injured or not.

The requests for capital funding were presented in order of priority, which was very helpful.

- Trench rescue equipment - \$20,000. This is needed to have a complete rescue unit—some parts have been obtained previously. These stabilize trenches after a cave in so that the person(s) buried can be dug out safely. Ten firefighters are trained in use of this equipment but rescues of this type are dangerous without proper equipment. Although, this will be only used 2-3 times a year, the equipment is needed. There was a death at UMass that occurred in a trench at a construction site. The Commonwealth mandates permitting of trenches by municipalities so perhaps there could be a charge for this permit to help pay for the equipment or we could bill (as others do) for rescues performed.
- Enlarge North Station Bay 3 so that the new Quint and the ambulance can both fit inside - \$25,000.
- Replace HVAC for North Station - \$65,000. This station has the most inefficient system and is noisy. It is unknown what the pay back time would be but Ron Bohonowicz is calculating that figure.
- Furnishings - \$15,000. They would replace the chairs and the beds, which are very worn.
- Fire Prevention Vehicle - \$32,000. The current vehicle was involved in an accident and should have been declared a loss. But the insurance company would only pay for repairs, and it has never worked properly since that time.
- Rehabilitation of 1988 Aerial Ladder Truck - \$95,000. The cost of replacement would be \$1 million. It is costing \$20,000/year in upkeep and if refurbished it would reduce the cost to \$5-6,000/year. Delaying would increase costs of yearly repair to \$15,000.
- Van, used - \$18,000. The student firefighters use an old bus every week for transport and they have to put in oil on the way down and on the way back.

The need for a new fire station in South Amherst was discussed as the response time of 18 minutes to Bay Road is too long. Remodeling the central fire station to make it compliant with earthquake specifications would be costly, as would staffing three fire stations.

Trees:

Molly Turner asked about where the money for planting replacement trees for those removed on town property was to come from.

Musante distributed capital request materials for the schools and for other Town Buildings and Facilities for the 3/5 meeting,

The meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.

Diana Stein, Acting Clerk